

A cold start to winter

25 November 2008



The latest update to the Met Office winter forecast suggests that although the coming winter will have temperatures near or above average, it is very likely that December will be colder than normal.

Tish Laing-Morton, Clinical Director at the Met Office says: "Cold spells, more likely this December, can be a real problem for people with respiratory illness and the elderly. Our Healthy Outlook service is designed to help people suffering with COPD to successfully manage their condition, especially during cold

weather".

The Met Office works closely with government departments such as the Department of Health supporting their Keep Warm Keep Well campaign, which aims to reduce cold-related illness and some of the estimated 25,000 excess winter deaths each year.

Notes

- Our seasonal forecasts indicate how particular seasonal conditions may be more likely than others. The forecast is for the whole season and is not able to forecast specific details about any particular day or location within the season.
- Forecasting skill varies for different weather elements, and from season to season. The skill of our winter forecasts is greater than that of our summer forecast and the skill for temperature is higher than for rainfall.
- The 1971 to 2000 average winter temperature for the UK is 3.7 °C. The average winter precipitation for the UK is 332 mm.
- The winter is taken to be the complete months of December, January and February.
- The winter forecast will be updated monthly throughout the winter. Updates will be published at 1000 on 22 December and 22 January.